

## Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ADP-00 EURE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

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TRSE-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 RSR-01 /136 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3066

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

SECDEF

SECDEF

CINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 08891

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, IC, UK

SUBJECT: FISHERIES DISPUTE: NO HALT IN BRITISH FISHING

REF: REYKJAVIK 898

WITHOUT MENTIONING REFTEL WE DISCUSSED WITH FCO OFFICIAL STATE OF PLAY IN DISPUTE AS SEEN FROM HERE AND ELICITED FOLLOWING INFORMATION: BEFORE FISHING YEAR ENDS AUGUST 31, BRITISH TRAWLERS WILL NOT (REPEAT NOT) REACH 170,000 TON LIMIT SET BY ICI. FISHING YEAR IN QUESTION IS FROM SEPTEMBER 1, 1972, DATE ON WHICH COURT HANDED DOWN ITS CONFIDENTIAL

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INTERIM DECISION WHICH SET THE LIMIT, TO AUGUST 31, 1973.

TRAWLERS WILL STAY IN ICELANDIC FISHING AREAS THROUGH END OF CURRENT FISHING YEAR AND WILL CONTINUE TO FISH WITHOUT BREAK INTO NEXT FISHING YEAR. THEY WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE PROTECTION OF BRITISH FRIGATES. FCO ANNOUNCED SHORT TIME AGO THAT EXPECTED CATCH IN CURRENT YEAR WOULD BE BETWEEN 155,000 AND 165,000 TONS. ICJ IN A RECENT RENEWAL OF ITS DECISION AGAIN SET LIMIT AT 170,000 TONS AND BRITISH TRAWLERS WILL CONTINUE TO BE BOUND BY THIS FIGURE.

BRITISH POSITION ON NEGOTIATIONS IS CONTAINED IN THE WHITE PAPER OF MAY 4 WHICH PRESENTS COUNTER-PROPOSALS THAT ARE STILL ON TABLE AS FAR AS HMG IS CONCERNED. NO RESPONSE HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM ICELAND, BUT BRITISH ARE READY TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS AT ANY TIME ON BASIS OF COUNTER-PROPOSALS. ICELAND HAS CLEARLY STATED THAT THERE WILL BE NO NEGOTIATIONS WHILE BRITISH FISHERIES PROTECTION VESSELS ARE WITHIN 50-MILE LIMIT, AND THUS DEADLOCK CONTINUES.

FINANCIAL TIMES REPORTED TODAY THAT TOTAL FISH CATCH IN ICELANDIC WATERS IS ESTIMATED BY FISHING INDUSTRY TO BE ABOUT 160,000 TONS FOR CURRENT YEAR. INDUSTRY SAID TO BE SATISFIED SINCE, ALTHOUGH CATCH LOWER THAN LAST YEAR'S 184,000 TONS, SHORTFALL OFFSET BY HIGHER PRICES. INDUSTRY CREDITS PROTECTION AFFORDED BY NAVY AS RESPONSIBLE FOR SATISFACTORY CATCH. FT REPORTER WRITES FEELING IN INDUSTRY IS THAT DISPUTE WILL GO TO LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE. BRITISH FISHING INTERESTS SAID TO BE RECONCILED TO EXTENSION OF ICELAND'S FISHING LIMITS, BUT HOPE IS FOR NEGOTIATED PHASE-OUT. INDUSTRY MEANTIME LOOKING TO OTHER AREAS AND BARENTS SEA APPEARS OFFER PROSPECTS FOR NEXT SEASON.

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